DOCUMENT RESUME

LI 001 154

ED 024 428

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Feasibility of a Cooperative Processing Center for Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Montgomery and Prince Georges Counties in Maryland.

Spons Agency- Maryland State Dept. of Education, Baltimore. Div. of Library Extension.
Pub Date 67
Note- 66p.
EDRS Price MF- $0.50 HC- $3.40
Descriptors- Book Catalogs, Cataloging, *Centralization, Cost Effectiveness, Financial Support, Library Acquisition, *Library Cooperation, Library Material Selection, *Library Planning, Library Programs, *Library Technical Processes, *Public Libraries
Identifiers- *Maryland

A study was conducted for the public library systems of Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Montgomery and Prince Georges Counties to determine what aspects of their acquisitions, cataloging and processing operations, if any, might be carried on cooperatively for lower costs and improved services. Conclusions and recommendations were that: (1) the growth of the four counties indicates that a cooperative technical services operation is feasible and will provide better services at substantial unit savings, (2) the center should continue to produce book catalogs using brief bibliographical information, as the four systems now do, although this does not preclude recording fuller bibliographical information in machine-readable form for later use, (3) uniform standards should be adopted for cataloging, classification, acquisition and processing, and cooperative methods of book selection should be explored, (4) the new processing center should be housed in quarters independent of but centrally located to all four systems, (5) the State Division of Library Extension should give financial assistance to the center for the initial establishment period, to be followed by adoption of a simple, equitable method of allocating support requirements among the member libraries and State, and (6) the libraries should begin at once a detailed implementation study for joint service. Appendixes include statistical data, sample book catalog pages, and a bibliography of 12 items. (JB)

LI 001154

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EDO 24428

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for

Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Montgomery and
Prince Georges Counties in Maryland

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New York, New York
1967

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UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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INTRODUCTION

Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Montgomery and Prince Georges Counties are near the cities of Baltimore and Washington, D.C. and contain more than half of the population of Maryland state. With a population of more than two million anticipated by 1970, it is estimated that there will be close to 3,850,000 residents by the turn of the century.

Each county has a public library system that has experienced phenomenal growth in the last ten years. From its inception as a county system, each has established centralized processing for its branches. One striking aspect of these libraries has been their progressive approach to new ideas and their willingness to experiment productively.

Faced with the prospects of a population predicted to double in the next twenty years, these libraries are now seeking ways to plan for better library service not only for their present library patrons but for those of the future. With the encouragement and financial assistance of the Division of Library Extension of the Maryland State Department of Education, they have requested a study to determine what aspects of their acquisitions, cataloging and processing operations, if any, might be carried on

cooperatively in such a way as to lower costs and improve services.

TECHNICAL SERVICES

Library acquisitions, cataloging and classification, and processing operations are usually known collectively as the technical services. As contrasted with the public services performed by libraries, the technical services are made up of those activities carried on without direct contact of the library staff with the public.

The technical services are made up of a number of operations, many of which are repetitively performed. This makes them much more susceptible to the application of techniques for improved service at lower unit costs than reference work or assistance to readers which must be individually tailored to the needs of the library patron.

It is evident—and has long been a commonplace observation among librarians—that it is wasteful to catalog and process the same title individually in each of a group of libraries when it might be handled once at some central point for all of them.

This observation might equally be applied to many of the other operations of the technical services. Indeed,

it was its application to their own internal services which has led the four county systems to consider whether it should not be applied on an even larger scale among them.

COOPERATION IN THE TECHNICAL SERVICES

The county libraries have cooperated both formally and informally for some time in other areas. It was quite natural that they should discuss further cooperation in the technical services, and that their discussion should take an extremely practical form: a series of questions directly related to the needs of the public they served.

These questions formed the basis of this study. They are so practical and direct that they form a useful and appropriate starting place for this report, which must also consider more general questions as a background before returning to these specific points. Somewhat paraphrased, they ran as follows:

1) Is it feasible to consolidate the ordering, purchasing, cataloging, and processing of books for the four metropolitan libraries?

2) Would it produce savings in book costs, personnel, equipment, or other costs?

3) Would it provide for services of as high or higher quality than at present?

4) Would it produce a book catalog or catalogs of equally high quality as the present ones at a more economical cost?

5) Would consolidation slow down delivery of books and production of book catalogs?

6) Would a separate organization be required to carry out these tasks if consolidation is desirable?

7) What agreements would need to be made in regard to such factors as cataloging information, standardization of order procedures, and methods of processing? What is the consensus of experts in regard to suitable standards?

8) If a consolidated operation is desirable, how should it be financed, both initially and over the long term?

9) Is it possible to estimate approximate establishment cost figures?

10) What advantages and disadvantages would consolidation have?

11) Would a consolidated organization be its own jobber, ordering direct from publishers rather than through a wholesaler?

12) Should a consolidated organization be used as a center for the purchase of supplies and equipment other than books and informational materials for the participating libraries?

13) Assuming, again, that consolidation is advisable, what equipment would the center require, or require access to—particularly as this might involve electronic data processing equipment?

14) What should be the organizational and administrative pattern for centralization of technical services among the libraries?

Chapter I

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The growth and potential growth of the four counties and their library systems indicate that a cooperative technical services operation for the Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Montgomery and Prince Georges Counties is both feasible and desirable in the interests of providing better services at substantial unit savings. It would produce savings in ordering costs, personnel, equipment and supplies as well as releasing space in the member libraries for other library activities.

2. The four library systems have been pioneers in producing catalogs of their holdings in book form. The center should be responsible for continuing to produce book catalogs using the brief bibliographical information which now seems adequate for both the librarians and patrons. It should be noted that this does not preclude the recording of fuller bibliographical information in machine-readable form for later use. Indeed, we feel that the center will inevitably tend to provide fuller and better analysis of library materials in the future.

3. Agreement should be made as soon as possible

upon a single uniform set of rules for cataloging and classification and procedures for the acquisitions and preparation of library materials by the participating libraries with no deviations or exceptions being made either by the center or by the libraries. It is further recommended that cooperative measures in book selection be explored so as to eliminate much of the duplication that now occurs.

4. The new processing center should be completely independent of any of the participating libraries and should be housed in quarters independent of but centrallly located to all four library systems.

5. The center should be assisted in its establishment by the Division of Library Education of the Maryland State Department of Education for an initial period of two years. To avoid complicated and possibly costly accounting procedures, the simplest and most equitable method of allocating support requirements should be found to sustain the center after the initial period.

6. The libraries should begin to implement plans for joint services as quickly as possible without waiting for the conclusion of work in progress elsewhere. A detailed implementation study should begin at once.

Chapter II

DESIRABILITY OF CENTRALIZATION

BACKGROUND

Centralization of the technical services for groups of libraries is certainly not unusual. If we consider in the definition of centralized technical processing the services of this kind provided within administratively centralized library systems, the large city public libraries have provided such services for their branches at least since the turn of the century.

From their inception as county libraries, the Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Montgomery, and Prince Georges county systems have similarly centralized these services for the libraries within each system.

Administratively centralized library systems have over the years increased rather than decreased their degree of centralization of the technical services. No study or survey appears to have recommended decentralization of technical service activities; many have recommended the discontinuance of existing separately run cataloging or processing work advising its amalgamation with the centralized service.

Centralized Provision of Cataloging Information

Centralized provision of cataloging information has been the goal of American librarianship since Charles Coffin Jewett advocated it in 1854. Since the Library of Congress began issuing printed catalog cards more than 65 years ago, provision of services from outside individual libraries or library systems has also increased. Other services providing printed cards have grown substantially in coverage and in number, particularly in the last five or six years. There has been a marked increase in the amount and speed of published cataloging information such as is provided in Publisher's Weekly and the American Book Publishing Record. The provision of Dewey numbers on Library of Congress cards beginning in 1930 and the indication of segmentation of these numbers (a convenience for smaller libraries) beginning in 1967 are other examples.

Outside Provision of Other Technical Services

Outside provision of other technical services has also grown in the past few years. Several specialized firms and a number of publishers or wholesalers now offer kits of various kinds to be used for local processing—including preprinted spine labels, book cards, book pockets, etc. Various contract arrangements for full

processing, including the production of catalogs in book form, have come into being and grown rapidly.

Influence of Technology

Technological advances are having a major impact on libraries today, primarily in the technical services. This impact will be far more widely and deeply felt over the next decade.

Using the computer and data processing equipment, libraries have proven that they can use these technological advances in technical services to create a total integrated system at lower unit costs. By using the original order card in machine readable form for each of the technical services operations—ordering, receiving, producing labels for the book pocket and spine, billing, creating accession lists—the required manual duplication of the same bibliographical information for the different operations has been eliminated.

Size Limitations

It would appear that within a group of libraries there must be some upper limit to the size of an economic centralized processing unit set by transportation costs, bookkeeping costs, or some similar factor or group of factors for particular situations.

In a study made in the 1950's of the three New York City library systems, Ralph R. Shaw indicated that he felt that this upper limit had been reached by these systems, and that centralization of technical services activities among them would result neither in increased economy nor in improvement of services.

Among other factors, the study noted that the purchasing power of each individual unit was already so large that no further discount on prices of library materials could be anticipated as a result of amalgamation. Consolidation of technical services among the libraries would also result in increased transportation and bookkeeping costs, and probably delays in processing.

In 1966, however, a study of the same three library systems urged the establishment of a joint technical services facility. This study recommendation, made by Nelson Associates, is in the process of implementation, despite the fact that conversion to a unified system in the case of such large and long-established agencies with so many titles is difficult and expensive.

The two studies are not really contradictory. The Shaw survey rested upon sound data now made obsolete by changes in technology. It is these changes which make still greater centralization of the technical services

for New York City feasible and economic.

Pennsylvania Study

While there have been a number of studies of the desirability of founding centralized services in particular areas, most of which have recommended establishment, there is at least one major study which did not recommend centralized technical services for a group of libraries.

This important survey, carried out by Dr. Sarah K. Vann, examined the possibility of centralized processing for a number of libraries in eastern Pennsylvania. The study concluded that the difficulty in securing agreement on a unified standardized procedure for cataloging and processing was too great to be solved, owing to the existence of so many long-established catalogs following so many different policies and procedures. This was perhaps the single most important reason why centralization was not recommended. The study listed in addition many other problems: transportation, administration, organization, and equitable finance. These contributed to the final recommendation.

It is of interest to note that all of the difficulties mentioned in this report, with the possible exception of transportation, would not apply in administratively

centralized systems. Even in the negative recommendation, the report concluded that centralized processing is desirable, but that it was not possible to achieve the conditions prerequisite for its success in the Pennsylvania situation.

THE FOUR MARYLAND COUNTIES

It is somewhat startling to note that it is primarily general consideration and not the detailed exposition of existing methods and procedures which is required to justify the conclusions of this report. These general considerations and background are far more important than local conditions in determining the advisability of centralized technical services for the four Maryland counties. Close examination has indicated that special circumstances provide an unusually flexible situation within the four county systems. These circumstances are in large part due to the relative newness of the operation of these county libraries on a large scale; the absence of any massive backlog of cataloged titles such as would be the case if any of the systems had a large, long-established central library agency; the simplified and efficient management of technical services operations in most of the county libraries; and by no means least important,

the flexible attitude and emphasis on public service which mark all of the existing systems.

Obstacles to the Establishment of Technical Services Centers

No set of conditions are ever ideal, but the existing conditions for the successful operation of an economic and useful service are exceptionally favorable in this instance. The main factors which have deterred the establishment of such centers elsewhere, or which have led to major problems in their operation do not appear to exist in Maryland.

The most relevant deterrent factors might well be listed again: high catalog maintenance costs in each individual agency outlet; undue complexity in cataloging and preparation procedures; very large individual collections in terms of titles held, organized by procedures difficult to reconcile with efficient centralized operation; transportation and communication problems; lack of experience with large-scale processing and cataloging operations; rigid order procedures; unrealistic book preparation requirements; and undue rigidity of personnel and of administrative policies and procedures.

Cataloging and Preparation Procedures. The two principal difficulties to be overcome would seem to be

the commitment of Prince Georges County to a particular cataloging system, and the relatively less important problem of reconciling book examination and order routines. Both seem susceptible of solution.

It has been suggested that the center on establishment may use the facilities which have been planned for the use of the Prince Georges County System for catalog production, either on a short-term basis until some other arrangement can be made, or if it seems satisfactory, on a long-term basis.

One possible barrier to full agreement is the commitment of the Prince Georges Library to very full bibliographic information in the catalog. At the present time, so as to permit the earliest development of the center, it would not seem suitable to combine the catalogs of all the libraries. One reason for this is the amount of bibliographic information wanted in the Prince Georges County catalog. Another is that the Montgomery County system wants location symbols and Cutter numbers. It would not seem practicable to produce a consolidated catalog which has either of these features.

Transportation. Transportation, which has proved a serious difficulty in other attempts to establish centralized processing, would appear to cause no new problems here

at all. The four libraries already provide for the transportation of books processed centrally at the county level to all the libraries within each county and have already established transportation facilities providing daily service among the county libraries. The bulk of material to be transported if a centralized agency were to be established would not significantly change the present and presently anticipated transportation situation.

Centralized Standards. Past experience within each county library makes it clear that if centralized standards for cataloging and processing were adopted, individual agencies would follow rather than change or add to them after materials were received.

Catalog Production. It would seem that existing arrangements for catalog production or processing would pose some problems (from a management point of view) in the event of consolidation. Depending upon the exact method of computer catalog production decided upon after consolidation, the libraries would have to break off their existing catalogs at suitable points. When a library is currently contracting with an outside agency to produce its catalog, this break must occur at the end of a contractual period.

Advantages in the Establishment of Technical Services Centers

One of the advantages frequently cited for consolidation of technical services of different libraries has been that of obtaining greater discount rates for the purchase of books and materials. The situation of the four Maryland libraries, like that of each of the three libraries serving New York City, is such that each of the libraries probably receives the maximum available discount on such purchases already, so that the pooling of their resources for purchasing would not result in substantially lower prices for books. It should be noted, however, that this conclusion does not apply to the question of the possible economic advantages in ordering to be secured by the libraries through the use of more efficient but more expensive equipment on a shared basis.

Visits were made to the libraries and to the technical processing centers which each now maintains. Generally speaking, the existing technical processes operations are quite well managed. It is fair, therefore, to estimate that savings produced from centralization would not primarily result from basic management improvement, but would be due to: economies inherent in an increase in repetitive operations; to the fact that larger scale operations would

permit economic employment of equipment not possible to the individual libraries; and to a more favorable clerical-professional staff ratio than is now possible.

The current costs of the technical services operations of the four library systems are listed in the Appendix. All these costs seem reasonable in relation to the materials cataloged and processed by each system. In the face of the projected population increase in the next twenty years and concomitant increase in library service demands, these costs would become larger and larger and take a greater percentage of each library's budget, and the technical services operations would require much more space.

But even based on the current level of operations, it is apparent economies would be achieved through a centralized operation. For example, there are 17½ professional staff members in the four libraries devoting their time to technical services. It is obvious that there is much duplication of effort in the cataloging of the same materials and reproducing the same records. There are possibilities in achieving some savings in the purchase or rental of more sophisticated equipment, supplies and personnel at the current level, at one processing center, but the stabilization of costs to meet the future growth of the four systems is far more significant.

It should be underscored that, regardless of the economies to be achieved through the center, its existence does not necessarily mean a reduction even for a single year of the appropriations required to maintain the existing county libraries. This is due to the rise in population which places ever-increasing pressures on library services, as well as to the growing awareness of the need for a continual upgrading in the quality of library services provided. This is true nationally and even more in the Maryland area with its high percentage of educated population engaged in highly skilled professional, governmental and research occupations or in clerical positions requiring a high degree of verbal and written skills.

Chapter III

FORM OF CATALOG

BOOK CATALOGS

Library catalogs in book form, dropped at the end of the nineteenth century because of the maintenance cost, have again become economic with the advent of new technology. The old advantages of multiple copies of the book catalog, its portability, and ease of use are being appreciated anew.

While xerography, facsimile transmission, teletype, and other technical devices have had an important influence on libraries and are likely to have even more, the most influential of all of the technological innovations since World War II, in libraries as elsewhere, is the computer. Its use—and the use in general of data processing equipment—allows for a flexibility in cumulation of catalogs and re-use of the same information from a single original machine-readable copy which is not possible with other methods.

The sequential card camera, for example, permits a far better catalog appearance than is as yet generally

available as computer output but requires far more input effort for catalog production. The same information is not generally useable for ordering, accession lists, or special purpose bibliographies. It may be confidently predicted that economic production of catalogs of high graphic quality from computer output in the very near future is inevitable.

It also seems inevitable that computer-based book catalog production will supersede both the card catalog and the book catalog produced by shingling cards or using the sequential card camera. This is especially true where multiple copies of the catalog are desirable, or where there is considerable duplication of collections between library service points which can share the costs of joint catalog production using the same information for multiple purposes, or both. This conclusion is reinforced by a joint survey of library plans for and current use of data processing equipment on a national scale recently carried out by the Special Libraries Association and the American Library Association financed by the Library Technology Program; by a recent study of book catalog costs, using computers, made at the University of California; by the recent decision of the New York Public Library Reference Department to shift to a computer-based book catalog; and

by a number of similar studies and projects.

PROJECT MARC

The Library of Congress recently has begun issuing catalog copy in machine-readable form on magnetic tape. This program, known as Project MARC (Machine Readable Cataloging), is in its early experimental stages, and will undoubtedly require a considerable period of development before the many problems involved in any such undertaking on a nation-wide scale can be solved. Again, however, it is probably fair to risk a prediction that some such program is inevitable, and that the problems will be solved in the near future.

PROBLEMS IN COMPUTER-BASED CATALOG PRODUCTION

The major difficulties encountered by libraries in the use of computers so far have not been due to the nature of the computer but rather to three other factors:

1) The lack of suitable input-output devices;

2) The lack of suitable programs and programing methods and languages;

3) The unsuitability of the form of some cataloging information, under present standards, for easy and economic machine manipulability.

The first two of these problems appear well on the way to solution, and work is proceeding on the third. As is true of most human activities, it does not appear justifiable to await the elimination of all problems before acting.

PRESENT BOOK CATALOGS

All of the four libraries are now engaged in the production of book rather than card catalogs. It appears evident from discussion with technical services personnel, public service staff, and members of the public that the book catalogs (while presenting problems of their own) seem more satisfactory to all concerned than card catalogs. All of the existing book catalogs may be characterized as short-title catalogs—that is, they contain less bibliographic information about each individual title than appears on present Library of Congress catalog cards. With only one exception to which we will return later, all of those queried felt the short-title catalog more suited to public library needs and more readily used by the public than catalogs containing fuller bibliographical information. This is true completely aside from the economic advantages which the short-title form offers.

It is unlikely that any of the participating libraries

would be willing to give up book catalogs. In addition, book catalogs produced on data processing equipment would appear to offer the most economic and efficient method of providing bibliographic access to the libraries' materials for the public. This is particularly true for the Maryland libraries. The difference in favor of data processing equipment over other production means is likely to be even more marked in the future. It is recommended that the book catalogs produced should be in short-title form, at least for the immediate future. This is not only due to the economy of printing the short-title form, but to the difficulty of manipulation by machine of very extensive amounts of bibliographic information without making a programing effort too large to be attempted for the initial operation.

It should be noted that this does not preclude the recording of fuller bibliographic information in machine readable form for later use. Indeed, the center will inevitably tend to provide fuller and better analysis of library materials in the future than any of the libraries now have or plan. Whether this will be in the form of fuller descriptive cataloging or, as seems more likely, in the form of provision of fuller subject analysis and analytics, will depend on developments at the center and

elsewhere—within Project MARC, for example.

The initial stages of the establishment of book catalog procedures have invariably been difficult, expensive, and time consuming. The four county libraries are no exceptions in this respect. It might well be anticipated that the change to unified and standard procedures and a new catalog structure would require another readjustment of the libraries similar to that which each went through on the establishment of its own book catalog.

A return to the card catalog would not solve this problem nor would this appear desirable for any other reason. If technical services are consolidated, the libraries will certainly wish to retain book catalogs.

PRESENT PRODUCTION OF BOOK CATALOGS

The existing book catalogs are produced by several different methods. One is run using county tab card equipment and offset printed at a one-to-one reproduction ratio, with a planned shift to computer production. Another is currently produced by a contracting commercial agency on its computer facilities, using an upper and lower case chain. The third method used also involves outside production by a commercial agency, in this case using a sequential card camera and offset printing.

One of the libraries now has under development a quite elaborate computer-based catalog production system so planned as to take advantage of the availability of county equipment.

The Montgomery County Public Library has the longest established book catalog and the second largest number of titles in machine readable form. It has an arrangement for catalog production using the data processing facilities of the county. This enables the county to make quite economic use of its equipment. It does appear likely, however, that other arrangements could be made, since the workload on county data processing facilities is probably increasing more than quickly enough to permit the fullest possible use of that equipment even if the library catalogs were no longer processed on it. It should be recognized, however, that this would require additional provision in the library budget for Montgomery County to provide for those costs previously allocated elsewhere in the county budget.

The acquisition of a computer by the Prince Georges County government has figured in the planning of a computer-based cataloging system for that library. Plans are considerably advanced, and a definite commitment has been made to the county government for the use of facilities.

So long as the commitment to use these facilities for a reasonable time can be honored after consolidation, there appears to be no reason why this arrangement should prevent Prince Georges County from participating in a larger consolidated technical processing system. It is typical that when any organization newly acquires a computer, there is considerable time available on it. This available time bulks large in minds of those responsible for ordering the computer, as they would like to see its purchase quickly justified. Use is slow at first because needed software does not exist. Within a comparatively short time, however, the computer is usually fully employed, with a waiting line for any time which may be available. Thus, it may be assumed that the Prince Georges County computer can be employed in the initial stages of consolidation and its use later either continued or discontinued depending upon which arrangement seems best for the county and the libraries.

One of the largest bodies of catalog information in machine readable form is the record of the Baltimore and Montgomery County Library holdings, totalling well over 100,000 titles. The subject heading lists have been quite carefully developed and are available in machine-sequenceable form.

It is recommended that this existing machine-readable copy seriously be considered as a preliminary basis for the center's book cataloging information despite the facts that the Montgomery County material has no provision for lower case letters and that it does not offer as full cataloging information as might be desirable later on. Fuller information can be provided for current titles as they are added, and for older titles when they are reordered by any of the member libraries. It would be possible, by using an algorithm which is already developed, to produce suitable bibliographic capitalization in upper and lower case—although not library capitalization styling—from the existing all upper-case Montgomery County input records. This alternative might well be considered by the center. There would be no particular incongruity or disadvantage in having some entries in the catalogs be fuller than others because particular titles were cataloged at different times or places. Indeed, this is a situation which is often found in card catalogs compiled over a long period of years.

Chapter IV

UNIFORM STANDARDS

CATALOG STANDARDIZATION-HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Study after study, both of public and of college and university libraries, has urged greater standardization of cataloging and classification and greater acceptance of the standard cataloging provided by the Library of Congress and other agencies. This has been true even where conversion of existing collections from the previous systems used has been extremely expensive, or where dual systems of cataloging, with resultant inconvenience to the public, would have to be maintained in lieu of converting older large collections to the current standard.

Many libraries which recognized the desirability of conforming to national standards decades ago but did not do so because of the expense of conversion at that time are now carrying through the conversion of far larger collections at far greater expense and inconvenience than would have been necessary if they had changed earlier.

One of the most significant difficulties in the establishment of a processing center for a group of independent libraries has been getting them to agree upon a single standard policy for all aspects of the technical services. In many instances, the individual libraries required specialized cataloging or processing different from that of their neighbors, thus losing the economic advantage of processing large amounts of material by uniform procedures.

Alteration of or Addition to Work Done by the Center

In other cases, member libraries have lost the major advantages to be expected from the centralized services by altering or adding to the cataloging or processing which the books received in the central agency. This usually appears to have been done to make the cataloging fit with that previously done in the member library before participation in the centralized agency, or because an individual librarian felt there would be advantages to a particular library in making changes. Such procedures nullify the advantages to be expected from the establishment of a centralized agency.

Influence of these Changes on Quality

In most cases where these practices have actually been observed, they have not increased the quality of cataloging or service. They generally perpetuate practices and procedures which at best were not particularly superior to those of the centralized service but merely different. At worst, they have perpetuated far lower standards of quality and efficiency than would have been the case if the centralized services had been adopted without alteration. It is probably fair to say that this has been the greatest single problem for centralized cataloging services.

It is, of course, a problem faced by the commercial services in a somewhat different way. They generally offer a standardized processing and cataloging routine at one price but will undertake to provide deviations at an additional charge. The additional charge usually has to be a fairly steep one, since it involves departures from standard practice for a relatively small number of units. An examination of the records of one of the largest concerns doing commercial centralized cataloging and processing indicates that most of the deviations from standard practice do not represent improvements in quality, but show a desire to fit new

materials into a large existing catalog for which non-standard procedures have been followed.

In some instances the deviations from the standard policy seemed to be purely the result of habit or custom in the requesting library and not to have any real utility at all. One representative example is that of a library which requested that subject headings on index cards be typed in red at an additional cost of 7¢ per card, although this practice has long been abandoned by most libraries as unnecessary.

Unification of Order Procedures

Another major problem encountered by cataloging and processing centers has been that of establishing a unified order procedure so that requests for new titles may be satisfactorily batched for maximum economy while orders go out promptly in order not to delay receipt of books by the member libraries.

Back Ordering

Most cooperative or federated centers seem not to have achieved the economy in back ordering of older titles that is made possible in administratively centralized systems by the circulation of lists for back order purchasing or by the establishment of frequently recurring

cycle periods for ordering titles in specific areas, or both.

Time Delays Occasioned by Order Procedures

Difficulties of this kind have been a contributory factor in one of the major complaints against the centralized processing and technical services—delay in the receipt of titles by the member libraries.

Other Factors Causing Delays

Other factors which are also problems in themselves have contributed to these delays. These include transportation difficulties and costs, complicated accounting procedures, and either overestimation of the capacity of the center or underestimation of the processing demands which would be placed on it.

It would appear evident from the historical background given above that continuing standardization of cataloging in conformity with a national norm is desirable for the Maryland libraries in order to achieve maximum quality at the lowest possible unit cost, almost independent of the desirability of centralization of the technical processes. Judging from the experience of other library systems and, for that matter, that of the Maryland County libraries since their establishment,

there would appear to be much to gain and little to lose by the adoption of uniform cataloging policy on those matters still left open after the adoption of a standard for catalog copy.

PRESENT CATALOGING POLICIES

The amount of bibliographical information given for each title cataloged varies from county to county with two of the library systems leaning on the basic information of author, title, edition, publisher and date of publication. Except for the Montgomery County Library which used the Los Angeles County List of Subject Headings as its base, all libraries use the Library of Congress List of Subject Headings as their authority. Cataloging policies as to main entry decisions vary only slightly.

The Anne Arundel and Prince Georges Libraries use the 17th edition of the Dewey Decimal Classification schedules as authority in assigning class numbers, while Baltimore and Montgomery use both the 16th and 17th editions. However, the degree of truncation of the Dewey numbers varies among the libraries. In checking the classification numbers of the four libraries, it was found that the lowest percentage of similarity between

any of the two libraries was 62 percent, while the highest was 73 percent. These percentages would be even higher if agreement were reached on a uniform policy of classifying biography. There was also greater similarity in classification of the newer titles.

BIOGRAPHY

All four systems use different schemes for assigning class numbers to biography. Anne Arundel uses 921 with the biographee's surname below the number; Baltimore uses the letter "B" with the first initial of the biographee below; Montgomery uses the letter "B" with a Cutter number from the biographee; and Prince Georges uses the letter "B" with the biographee's surname below. This is the only area in classification where a uniform policy would affect seriously the present collections of three of the library systems if one of the above schemes was selected as the standard.

CUTTER NUMBERS

Montgomery County is the only system that uses Cutter numbers for all of its books. It can be argued that with the projected increases in book stock of all the libraries

the processing center should assign book numbers to all the books processed to anticipate this growth. It should be pointed out, on the other hand, that the Circulation Department of the New York Public Library—one of the largest public library systems in the country—has found no need for book numbers.

In the two areas that need finer organization than simply the class number and the first letter of the author's surname—biography and literary criticism—the Prince Georges scheme appears simplest and most practical. By using the full surname of the biographee below the biography number, all like biographies are shelved together. In literature, the author's surname appears below the call number; for books about the author's work, the first letter of the critic's surname appears in addition to the class number and author's surname. Thus, works by an author can be shelved first, and works about the author immediately after.

Except for a few local variations, all of the libraries seem to have followed the established general cataloging and classification standards and have increased their acceptance of the national standards over the years.

BOOK PROCESSING

While processing methods in the four libraries differ somewhat in detail, a standard processing method and standard location of each item, such as book pockets and library identification, could be adopted without causing significant difficulties.

AGREEMENT ON UNIFORM STANDARDS

It would be less difficult in the Maryland situation than in most others to agree on uniform cataloging and processing standards and policies. This is true for a number of reasons. The rapidly growing Maryland libraries have a progressive and flexible attitude toward the technical services, as is indicated by their forward-looking experimentation with book catalogs. Because of their location and pattern of growth and development, none of them have large central libraries with their consequent vast bulk of existing catalog entries for many titles under cataloging rules and policies which differ from one of the systems to the other. All of the Maryland libraries look forward to a continuing period of growth and expansion of both population to be served and in the use of the libraries by that population, and have

anticipated the necessity of continuing innovation to meet these needs.

While it is undoubtedly true that the changeover to an absolutely uniform standard will not be an easy one, the Maryland libraries appear better able to cope both physically and psychologically with the difficulties involved than would be true in the vast majority of instances of libraries adjacent to one another. The history of mutual cooperation among the libraries in the past would tend to bear out this conclusion.

PRESENT POOR SELECTION AND ORDER PROCEDURES

The county libraries at present vary considerably in their book selection and order procedures. However, all of them are costly and are not reflected in the cost tabulation appearing in the Appendix. One of the systems types the same bibliographical information as many as three different times before the books are received in the Cataloging Department. The use of punch card equipment would eliminate all such typing. It would allow the record to be in machine-readable form at the earliest possible moment and allow for additional information to be added—price, discount, classification number, library

code number—as the book goes through each step of the technical services operation.

Within the four systems, there is use of the Greenaway plan of acquiring books for selection in the adult and young adult areas. One library acquires books from forty publishers in this fashion, while another acquires books from ten. One system orders all of its books for review purposes from pre-publication announcements or trade reviews. Additionally, use is made of the Enoch Pratt Free Library's book selection facilities.

The libraries vary, likewise, in procedures for the selection of books in the children's area. One system receives about 1600 new titles from a commercial jobber on an automatic basis. Another uses the facilities of the Library of Congress, where all new children's books are displayed.

It would appear that, provided each library retains flexibility in acquiring special titles quickly and controls its own selections, there is no reason why acquisitions work could not satisfactorily be centralized. This would not lower discount rates, but should offer major savings in ordering costs. Indeed, there is no reason why cooperative book selection procedures could not operate effectively to cut down the present duplication

of reading and reviewing of the same title among the four systems.

BOOK EVALUATION CENTER

A cooperative book evaluation center located at the processing center and financed by the cooperating libraries would not only reduce greatly the present cost of acquiring books for review purposes but would also assure early receipt of one copy of new titles for inspection and evaluation. It is recommended that the use of the Greenaway plan be expanded to include those publishers where at least seventy-five percent of the titles would be ordered by at least one of the participating libraries.

The bibliographical information for each title would immediately be punched into machine readable form. After selection of books to be approved for branch ordering was made, the machine readable record would be used to produce ordering lists that libraries would check for number of copies, purchase orders for additional copies of the title to be ordered, record of encumbrance of funds, a balance run to prove the jobber's invoice, labels for the book pocket, book card and spine, and accession lists of new titles.

While the additional copies of a title were on order,

the approved copy would be available to the catalogers at the center for cataloging and classification. By the time these additional copies were received and the receipt verified, pockets and spine labels would have been prepared so the books could immediately be processed and shipped to the ordering library. Catalog copy would be available for entry into the next book catalog supplement.

While not essential to the success of the center but essential to keeping unit costs at the lowest possible level, agreement upon a suitable cycle ordering for back titles including the cooperative production of basic purchase lists should be considered. At the same time, the center can only be successful if the participating libraries are allowed to order individual titles whenever they are needed at any time.

Chapter V

ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION

FEDERATED COOPERATIVE AND COMMERCIAL TECHNICAL PROCESSING

It is of some interest to note that in current discussions of centralized technical processing, it is taken for granted that this means processing for groups of libraries not under a central administrative control. Centralized processing is so taken for granted within administratively centralized systems that its desirability is no longer a matter for discussion.

GROWTH OF CENTERS

Beginning in 1956, with the publication of the public library standards which urged the cooperation or confederation of groups of libraries in order to achieve standards of service which they could not achieve alone, there has been ever-increasing interest and practical accomplishment in the establishment of centralized processing centers for such groups of libraries.

Examples are numerous, but some which might be mentioned

include the Southwest Missouri processing center, the North Carolina center serving a number of colleges, and the very large number of federated and cooperative library systems in New York State. Maryland's Eastern Shore Book Processing Center may serve as another example.

Visits to these centers and the libraries they serve have shown problems and delays in the making of policy decisions. The tendency of a kind of least common denominator to have the strongest influence on policy often results in complex processing, in over-cataloging, and in the setting of an inadequate and complicated basis for determining the financial contributions to be made by member libraries. A fear of member libraries of losing their independence to the center is often a contributing factor.

THE FOUR COUNTY SYSTEMS

Under appropriate rules, the libraries would express their concern over problems by working cooperatively to improve the policies of the central service. The four existing systems are large enough so that they understand the problems involved in centralized services. All appear well managed and are highly concerned with meeting public

service needs at the lowest possible unit cost. This makes it far more likely that they will be able to agree upon suitable financial and administrative procedures than would be the case if they were smaller, less well managed, and less consciously aware of the costs involved.

It would appear that the factors to be considered in the Maryland case are primarily those posed by the fact that the libraries involved are separate agencies considering a cooperative endeavor. This means that the technical problem involved, which requires careful consideration in this instance, is the standardization of methods and procedures. The administrative problems, therefore, would appear to be more difficult than the technical ones.

ORGANIZATION

It is recommended that the center be established as a separate corporate body, chartered by the State of Maryland, with a board of trustees composed of representatives of the participating libraries and of the Division of Library Extension of the State. Rules for composition of the board should be so determined as to permit the addition of other libraries as participants, as other libraries may wish to join, without making the

board unwieldy in size. They should also be so drawn that withdrawal from participation by any of the member libraries would require reasonable notice—at least one to two years.

From a point of view larger than that of the immediate problems of the four county libraries, it would be most advantageous to establish the center in such a way that it will offer real possibilities for even larger-scale regional cooperation, economies, and service. This reinforces the need that the Division of Library Extension of the Maryland State Department of Education participate actively in the establishment and operation of the center and should be represented on its board.

ADMINISTRATION

The administration of the center should be independent of the administration of any one of the participating libraries. Its operation constitutes an important set of administrative tasks which should not be secondary to the needs of any one of the member libraries, as would inevitably be the case if this were added to the complexities of administration of one of the existing libraries. Its independent position would encourage additional libraries to join, thus increasing the

opportunity to achieve economies offered by the center. Only an administratively separate position would be attractive enough to secure the caliber of personnel necessary to run such a complex enterprise and to secure the respect and cooperation of all of its member libraries.

Since the major difficulties encountered by existing processing centers serving libraries under separate administrative authorities have been in the area of administration, management and policy, it is most important that the proposed center have an administrator of proven ability and an administrative pattern which would minimize those problems which have arisen elsewhere.

Chapter VI

FINANCING

Regional cooperation in public and other library services is encouraged by recent federal legislation in recognition of its great potentiality for raising the quality of library services. It would seem appropriate that the center seek outside funding initially for capital expenditures and for the beginning phases of operations. This may be done most appropriately through the assistance of the State Division of Library Extension.

There should be establishment assistance from the state for the initial period of the work of the joint library center to encourage participation, to assure that the initial establishment and operation is sufficiently financed to insure attainment of a level of operation high enough to provide good services, and to lead the cooperating libraries to look to the solution of appropriate problems through their center.

There have been attempts to found centers with inadequate initial financing, and in which the policies for sustaining the operation have not been clearly

enough defined beforehand.

Both the time and the expenditure required to start a new agency which is to engage in pioneering work are generally grossly underestimated. This is as likely to prove true in this case as in others. In particular, it is common to underestimate the preparation time as well as the implementation study time required before a new operating enterprise of this kind can achieve its normal beginning level of service. It is important to avoid miscalculations of this kind which lead to disappointment in the new center.

One of the major stumbling blocks in the operation of centers in the past has been in the means of assuring an equitable distribution of charges. It would be best, rather than to stipulate a charge per book processed or per individual service rendered, to have annual agreements on the distribution of budget responsibility among the member libraries and the State, and to assign full responsibility for the use of these funds to the Board and Director of the center.

Chapter VII

IMPLEMENTATION

The report has suggested certain areas that must be studied in great detail and in which firm decisions and standards must be established. The implementation study should consider the following areas:

1) Legal basis between the Center and the participating libraries and formal contract document;

2) Composition of the governing body to establish policies and to be financially responsible for the Center allowing for its future growth to include other libraries;

3) Method of financing the Center both initially and on a sustaining basis;

4) Analysis of equipment most suitable for the Center and the desirability of purchasing, renting or contracting for services;

5) Uniform bibliographical information to be included in the book catalogs and what would be economically feasible to record for possible future use;

6) Cataloging and classification code most consistent with the general policies of the four separate library systems;

7) Book preparation standards;

8) Cooperative book selection procedures;

9) Book catalogs and the most economical and quickest way to produce them;

10) Staff to administer and operate the Center;

11) Other cooperative ventures economically feasible as the result of computer and/or printing equipment availability;

12) Design and checking of system;

13) Preparation of forms and procedures manuals.

The consultant investigating the above areas will need at least a year to prepare the final plan of services of the operational center. He will need to visit successful processing centers and study them in depth. He will study the present technical services operations and meet with committees of both technical services and public services librarians to prepare standard operations that will meet the needs of all the libraries. He must investigate the capabilities of computers and peripheral equipment and decide what will be most economical and flexible for expansion.

Detailed planning and anticipation of problems that might arise are the keys to a successful launching of a new processing center along with a staff and budget large enough to prevent delays. Professional and clerical personnel must be recruited and hired before the center is operational. It is important that salaries be competitive and that of the director be attractive

enough to obtain an exceptionally able person with administrative, business and consultative experience.

Once the primary goal of the center is reached—the ordering, cataloging and processing of library materials at the lowest possible unit cost and fastest service for the four Maryland counties—consideration should be given to services beyond technical processing. Those areas must be outlined while the implementation study is being made so the consultant can make deliberate plans for eventual expansion where economies can be made. Cooperative subject bibliographies, reading lists, reviews and similar publications are the most obvious areas of cooperation. The center might well consider the production and/or dissemination of display materials, posters and book exhibits. It could well serve as the core of the library interbook service, print overdue notices and be of assistance in arranging agreements for the purchase of little used materials by one system to avoid unnecessary duplication.

It would be hoped that once the center was operating smoothly, it would offer its services to other libraries in Maryland and nearby states.

Finally, it might well serve as a model processing center for public libraries. Indeed, the formation of the

center as a model, showing what can be done through cooperative effort by really efficient centers of this kind, may well be as important a contribution to contemporary librarianship and library users as will its immediate value be to the libraries and the users of the Anne Arundel County Public Library, the Baltimore County Public Library, the Department of Public Libraries, Montgomery County, and the Prince Georges County Memorial Library.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1

GENERAL STATISTICS

	Anne Arundel	Baltimore	Montgomery	Prince Georges	Total
Population					
1960	206,634	492,428	340,928	357,395	1,397,385
1970(est.)	299,760	615,190	530,000	623,700	2,068,650
2000(proj.)	707,000	1,100,600	850,000	1,192,000	3,849,600
Budget					
1960	165,730.89	457,362	751,209	400,043	1,774,344.89
1966-67	552,985.00	2,061,035	1,695,632	1,750,191	6,059,843.00
Book Budget					
1960	52,296.26	97,533	189,500	77,586	416,915.26
1966-67	195,000.00	579,124	385,000	296,176	1,455,300.00
Branches					
1950	4	10	7	3	24
1960	4	10	12	10	36
1970	9	18	19	18	64
Bookmobiles					
1966-67	2	3	2	5	12
1970	2	3	4	5	14
Circulation					
1960	560,796	1,145,009	2,421,325	670,085	4,797,215
1965-66	771,280	2,773,591	3,495,612	1,646,577	8,687,060

Appendix 2

TECHNICAL SERVICES COST FIGURES
1965-1966

	Anne Arundel	Baltimore	Montgomery	Prince Georges	Total
Personnel					
Professional					
Salaries	4,274.50	30,236.98	34,917.00	51,257.15	120,685.63
Employer cont.*	555.68	3,930.81	4,539,21	6,663.43	15,689.13
Total	4,830.18	34,167.79	39,456.21	57,920.58	136,374.76
Clerical					
Salaries	31,089.40	61,697.16	42,356.00	104,549.10	239,691.66
Employer Cont.*	4,041.62	8,020.63	5,506.28	13,591.38	31,159.91
Total	35,131.02	69,717.79	47,862.28	118,140.48	270,851.57
Total Personnel	39,961.20	103,885.58	87,318.49	176,061.06	407,226.33
Non-Personnel					
Supplies	6,406.63	12,457.32	11,458.00	10,457.91	40,779.86
Machine rental	2,221.50	930.06	4,175.00	1,572.48	8,899.04
Bibliog. tools	100.00	1,000.00	950.00	500.00	2,550.00
Overhead**	1,000.00	2,011.00	4,420.00	4,213.00	11,644.00
Total Non-Pers.	9,728.13	16,398.38	21,003.00	16,743.39	63,872.90
Book Catalog	50,000.00	47,000.00	23,117.00	56,682.00	176,799.00
Grand Total	99,689.33	167,283.96	131,438.49	249,486.45	647,898.23

* An arbitrary figure of 13 percent of salaries was used.

** Since only one library rents space, this was eliminated in the computation.

Appendix 3

TECHNICAL SERVICES PERSONNEL PROCESSING STATISTICS, AND BOOK STOCK 1965-1966

	Anne Arundel	Baltimore	Montgomery	Prince Georges	Total
Personnel					
Professional	.5	3.75	5	8	17.25
Clerical	7.6	20.0	10	28	65.6
Total	8.1	23.75	15*	36	82.85
Space (sq. ft.)	1,356	2,000	4,420		
Titles Cataloged					
Adult	4,091	7,358	6,840	8,989	27,278
Juvenile	812	887	635	912	3,246
Total	4,903	8,245	7,475	9,901	30,524
Volumes Processed					
Adult		66,756	59,603	40,763	
Juvenile		27,366	43,408	21,937	
Total	31,643	94,122	103,011	62,700	291,476
Titles Owed	65,730	78,316	68,525	100,328	312,899
Volumes Owed	279,781	371,985	625,258	378,367	1,655,391
Sept. 1966					
Titles in book catalog	1,367	73,316	44,275	77,212	196,170
Titles not in book catalog	64,363	5,000	24,250	23,692	117,305

*This includes 3 clerical personnel employed exclusively in production of the book catalogs.

Appendix 4

COMPARISON OF COMPATIBILITY OF CLASSIFICATION NUMBERS

Anne Arundel with	Baltimore		Montgomery		Prince Georges	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
Same	94	69	75	72.8	43	62.3
Longer	9	6.7	3	2.9	2	2.9
Shorter	7	5.2	12	11.7	11	15.9
Slight Difference	16	11.8	8	7.8	10	14.6
Major Class Difference	10	7.3	5	4.8	3	4.3
Total	136	100.0	103	100.0	69	100.0

Baltimore with	Montgomery		Prince Georges	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
Same	391	73.4	474	61.8
Longer	9	1.7	19	2.5
Shorter	61	11.4	107	14.0
Slight Difference	32	6.0	90	11.7
Major Class Difference	40	7.5	77	10.0
Total	533	100.0	767	100.0

Montgomery with	Prince Georges	
	No.	Pct.
Same	302	61.8
Longer	35	7.2
Shorter	52	10.6
Slight Difference	65	13.3
Major Class Difference	35	7.1
Total	489	100.0

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